1;Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
S14 Abipon S14

tively whence the Abipones formerly came, I will at any rate tell you where they now inhabit. That vast extent of country bounded from north to south by the Rio Grande, or Iñatè, and the territories of Sta. Fè, and from east to west by the shores of the Paraguay, and the country of St. Iago, is the residence of the Abipones, who are distributed into various hordes. Impatient of agriculture and a fixed home, they are continually moving from place to place. The opportunity of water and provisions at one time, and the necessity of avoiding the approach of the enemy at another, obliges them to be constantly on the move. The Abipones imitate skilful chess-players. After committing slaughter in the southern colonies of the Spaniards, they retire far northwards, afflict the city of Asumpcion with murders and rapine, and then hurry back again to the south. If they have acted hostilities against the towns of the Guaranies, or the city of Corrientes, they betake themselves to the west. But if the territories of St. Iago or Cordoba have been the objects of their fury, they cunningly conceal themselves in the marshes, islands, and reedy places of the river Parana. For the Spaniards, however desirous, are not able to return the injuries of the savages, from the difficulty of the

1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
514 Abipon 514

roads, or their want of acquaintance with them. It sometimes happens that a lake or marsh, which the Abipones swim with ease, obliges the Spanish cavalry to abandon the pursuit.

The whole territory of the Abipones scarcely contains a place which has not received a name from some memorable event or peculiarity of that neighbourhood. It may be proper to mention some of the most famous of these places; viz. *Netagrandc Lpátage*, the bird's nest; for in this place birds resembling storks yearly build their nests. *Liquintánala*, the cross, which was formerly fixed here by the Spaniards. *Nihirenac Leënerelquiè*, the cave of the tiger. *Paët Latetà*, the bruised teats. *Atopehènta Lauaté*, the haunt of capibaris. *Lareca Caëpa*, the high trees. *Lalegraicavalca*, the little white things. Hail of enormous size once fell in this place, and killed vast numbers of cattle. Many other places are named from the rivers that flow past them. The most considerable are the Evòrayè, the Parana, or Paraguay, the Iñatè, the Rio Grande, or Vermejo, the Ychimaye, or Rio Rey, the Neboquelatèl, or mother of palms, called by the Spaniards Malabrigo, the Narahage, or Inespin, the Lachaoquè Nâuè, Yealc, Ycham, &c. the Rio Negro, Verde, Salado, &c.

In the sixtieth year of the present century, many families of Abipones removed, some to the

1:Dobrizhoffer M-S (ca. 1760) 1822
S14 Abipon S14

unacquainted with the very name of iron, they fought with wooden spears, fixing a cow's or stag's horn to the end of them by way of a point. But when the Abipones obtained iron points from the Spaniards, they dexterously inserted them into their spears, and used them to slaughter those from whom they had received them. When going to fight they grease the point of the spear with tallow, that it may enter more readily and deeper into the flesh. We have sometimes seen spears four palms deep in hostile blood, with such force had the Abipones driven them into the sides of the savages who attacked our colony. As their tents and huts are in general rather low, they fix their spears at the threshold of the door to have them always in readiness. By the number of spears you may know the number of warriors which the horde contains. As European generals, to conceal the scanty number of their forces, and to supply the want of warlike instruments, have sometimes placed machines of painted wood, on mounds, to frighten their more numerous adversary; we, in like manner, availing ourselves of the same species of cunning, fixed spears hastily made of reeds or wood, in the houses of the absent Abipones; deluded by which the enemies' scouts reported to their countrymen that the town was full of

1:Dobrizhoffer M-S (ca. 1760) 1822
SI4 Abipon SI4

484
726
[723]

cular form. Each has his spear fixed at his head, and four or five keep up a fire burning in the midst, unless fear of the enemy obliges them to refrain from this comfort, lest the blaze or the smoke should betray them: though on some occasions, it was of use to multiply fires, in order to deceive the enemy; for from the number of them the number of men passing the night thereabout is usually argued. By this artifice Cortez is said to have imposed upon the Mexicans. Whilst some are indulging in sleep, others, appointed to keep watch, scour the plain on horseback, both for the purpose of bringing back the scattered horses, and, on the approach of danger of admonishing their sleepy comrades by sound of trumpet. I have been astonished to see with what activity and fidelity they performed all the offices of watchmen in our colonies. Whole nights have they spent in riding up and down the plains adjacent to the town, even in very boisterous weather, whenever the slightest rumours were spread of the approach of the enemy. By the nightly sound of horns [202] and trumpets they signified that they were on the alert, and, by showing the enemy that their intentions were discovered, prevented them from making the attack: for it is usual with the savages never to attempt any thing except against the unprepared. During the whole

1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
514 Abipon 514

722 stalls, that they may be ready for the uses of war, they place the remainder in stations, access to which is rendered difficult to the enemy either by the high bank of a river, the intervention of a wood, or their ignorance of the way. They also look out for places of concealment for their wives and children, and all that are unable to defend themselves. The Spaniards told me they had often seen whole Indian families plunged up to the neck in lakes and rivers. √As
726 soon as ever a report is spread amongst the Abipones of the approach of an enemy, they immediately stain their faces, and carry about bundles of weapons, and a military trumpet, which they blow chiefly in the dead of the night, that the enemies may know from their scouts that they have shaken off all fear, and are vigilant and desirous of the conflict. When certified of the approach of the enemy's forces,
723 they provide for their safety in various ways.
726 If they are few in comparison with their adversaries, they make up for the want of strength by craft. That they may not be obliged to join in open battle, they use various artifices to prevent the enemy from gaining access to their stations. They set out on the road, and surprize them by an ambuscade, or make themselves appear more numerous by redoubled tumult of military trumpets, or leaving a num-

1:Dobrizhoffer M-S (ca. 1760) 1822
SI4 Abipon SI4

ber of drummers and trumpeters at a distance behind, pretend that they are only the part of a company that is to come after; or putting Spanish dresses on some of their men, make it appear as if they had Spanish soldiers at hand to give them aid. Misled by these artifices, the enemies not unfrequently give up their intention of fighting, and make the best of their way back again. Often, however, no opportunity is left them for stratagems. Compelled by a sudden inroad of the enemy, or allured by confidence of victory to resolve upon a combat, a piece of ground opposite the approaching enemy, and near the horde, is selected for the purpose, that they may be near their wives and children should they be in danger. Heralds are sometimes sent forward by the enemy to explain the causes of the war, and challenge the inhabitants to fight. But the bellowing of drums and trumpets, and horrid vociferations, are generally the only answer they obtain. Every thing preceding and accompanying a battle, is a spectacle worthy to be seen, and laughed at by Europeans. About the beginning of the conflict you may see jugglers mounted on horseback, who, making ridiculous gestures, and whirling round palm boughs in their hands, utter the direst imprecations on the hostile army: whilst old female